

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 20, 2010

The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Clinton:

I am writing in response to the recent terrorist attacks in Kampala, Uganda. The Administration has stated that it will step up its efforts to confront al-Shabaab, the Somali-based and al-Qaeda-linked group which has claimed responsibility for the attacks. I believe that this response must include the designation of Eritrea as a state sponsor of terrorism, given its support of this Islamist terrorist group.

These coordinated attacks took the lives of up to 76 innocents, including a young American activist, who had gathered to watch the World Cup. Of particular significance, this marked al-Shabaab's first attacks outside of Somalia's borders, underscoring the group's threat to the region, continent and even the United States.

As you know, U.S. law enforcement has been greatly concerned by reports of Somali-American youths disappearing from Minneapolis, Minnesota and other U.S. locales to join the jihad in Somalia. Indeed, in 2008 one Somali-American became the first known American suicide bomber, and last year two young Somali-Americans were charged with providing material support to terrorists.

The Government of Eritrea's support for al-Shabaab is well documented. Last year, Assistant Secretary for African Affairs Johnnie Carson testified before Congress that "We have...credible reports that the Government of Eritrea continues to supply weapons and munitions to extremists and terrorist elements." Indeed, in December 2009 - largely at the behest of African countries - the U.N. Security Council passed a resolution stipulating an arms embargo, travel restrictions and an asset freeze on Eritrea in response to its support for terrorism in Somalia. It demanded that Eritrea "cease arming, training, and equipping" al-Shabaab.

In the aftermath of these attacks, President Obama noted that "We are going to redouble our efforts...to make sure that organizations like [Al-Shabaab] are not able to kill Africans with impunity." Madam Secretary, the time to tackle state support of al-Shabaab is now, before this menace becomes even more potent and reaches our shores. That response must include an honest recognition of the destructive role the Government of Eritrea is playing in the region by designating it as a state sponsor of terrorism.

Sincerely,



EDWARD R. ROYCE
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on
Terrorism, Nonproliferation and Trade